

# KENTUCKY PRESS RELEASE



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## KENTUCKY FARMERS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT CROP PROSPECTS

Good growing conditions in Kentucky with generally adequate rainfall has resulted in a very promising crop year for Kentucky farmers according to the Kentucky Agricultural Statistics Service. Unlike last year's drought, the rains have come on a steady basis through most of the State. Production of corn, soybeans, other hay, dark-air cured and dark-fire cured tobacco were all up from last year. The burley tobacco crop production was down due to a reduction in the effective quota.

**Kentucky burley tobacco** production as of August 1 was forecast at 250.0 million pounds, down 34 percent from the previous year. This would be the smallest burley crop since 1942. The decrease in production resulted from a reduction in the effective poundage quota farmers can sell. The burley tobacco estimate was 20 percent above the effective quota of 208.7 million pounds. The harvested acres of 125,000 was down 85,000 acres. The yield was estimated at 2,000 pounds per acre, up 190 pounds from the 1999 drought reduced yield. This would be the largest yield since 1994. Tobacco blooming and topping progress was ahead of last year's pace and the 5 year average. Mild to moderate black shank has been reported statewide. Blue mold with variable severity continues to be a concern for producers in the eastern part of the State. For the **8-State Burley Belt**, production was forecast at 398.3 million pounds in 2000.

**Corn** production in **Kentucky** was forecast at 150.7 million bushels, up 22 percent from last year. This would be the largest crop in 6 years. Harvested for grain acres was estimated at 1.31 million acres, up 130,000 acres from last year. This would be the largest harvested acreage since 1986. Yield was forecast at 115 bushels per acre, up 10 bushels from 1999. Corn development continues to be behind last year's fast pace, but well ahead of the 5 year average. The **U.S.** corn production was forecast at 10.4 billion bushels, up 10 percent from 1999. If realized, this would be the largest production on record since 1866 when corn estimates began.

**Kentucky soybean** production was forecast at 36.7 million bushels, up 52 percent from last year's 24.2 million bushels. The 1999 crop had been reduced in size by the severe summer drought. Yield was forecast at 34.0 bushels per acre, up 13 bushels from last year's 21.0 bushels per acre. Harvested acreage was forecast at 1.08 million acres, down 6 percent from 1999. The soybean crop continues to benefit from generally timely rains with plant development comparable to last year but well ahead of the 5 year average. **U.S.** soybean production was forecast at 2.99 billion bushels, up 13 percent from last year's 2.64 billion bushels.

The **hay** production forecast for **Kentucky** was up, as rains have boosted the yield compared to last year's dry weather crop. **Alfalfa** yields are expected to average 3.0 tons per acre. Harvested acres at 200,000 were down 50,000 acres from 1999 and was the smallest acreage since 1980. On the other hand, **other hay** harvested acres were estimated at a record high 2.35 million acres. Yield was forecast at 2.2 tons per acre.

**Kentucky apple production** was forecast at 9.00 million pounds, unchanged from last year. Apple production was hit hard by April frost which did severe damage to the crop. Production has also been effected by last year's drought that put many trees under stress.

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